

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20 OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01

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R 250811Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7676

AMCONSUL UDORN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 16591

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, TH

SUBJECT: PHITSANULOK STUDENT DEMONSTRATION

FOLLOWING RECD FROM CHAING MAI DATED OCTOBER 24, 1973 SENT ACTION
BANGKOK BEING RPTD FOR YOUR INFO.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CHAING MAI 375

E.O. 11652, GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, TH

SUBJECT: PHITSANULOK STUDENT DEMONSTRATION

REF: A. CHIANG MAI 373

B. CHIANG MAI 374

1. 3,000 TO 4,000 PEOPLE, MAINLY STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED AT
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE IN PHITSANULOK OCTOBER 22 DEMANDING GOVERNOR
(POL. MAJ. GEN. SAMART WAIWANOND) RESIGN. AFTER SEVERAL HOURS
GOVERNOR APPEARED BEFORE CROWD AND AGREED TO SEND ITS WISHES TO
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, BANGKOK, AND ASK FOR TRANSFER FOR
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SAMART TO ANOTHER PROVINCE.

2. CONFRONTATION HAD ITS ROOTS OCTOBER 19 WHEN REMAINS OF STUDENT KILLED IN BANGKOK DEMONSTRATIONS WERE RETURNED TO HIS NATIVE PHITSANULOK. STUDENTS AND RELATIVES GATHERED IN PLAYGROUND LOCATED ACROSS FROM GOVERNOR'S OFFICE TO AWAIT ARRIVAL OF REMAINS. GOVERNOR, INCENSED WITH SIZE OF CROWD, ORDERED PEOPLE TO MOVE ON, SCOLDING "ARE YOU CRAZY? WHAT WAS THE DEAD TO YOU, WHY CARE ABOUT HIM?" GOVERNOR ALSO REFUSED TO GO TO FUNERAL RITES.

3. WHEN REMAINS ARRIVED, PROCESSION FORMED TO MARCH TO WAT FOR CEREMONY. GOVERNOR REPORTEDLY TRIED TO STOP MARCH, BUT PEOPLE IGNORED ORDER. CREMATION THEN TOOK PLACE OCTOBER 22, AFTER WHICH LARGE CROWD DEMONSTRATED OUTSIDE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE UNTIL HE PROMISED TO SEEK TRANSFER. SIGNS IN CROWD ACCUSED HIM OF CORRUPTION, OF BEING "PRAPHAT'S MAN," AND OF IGNORING THE GOOD OF HIS PROVINCE.

4. COMMENT: EPIDEMIC OF PROTESTS AGAINST PROVINCIAL LEADERS IN THE NORTH (REFS A AND B) SEEMINGLY UNCONNECTED. HOWEVER, ALL CERTAINLY TAKE HEART FROM AND GROW OUT OF EARLIER SUCCESS IN BANGKOK. INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT NO VIOLENCE WHATSOEVER HAS OCCURRED AS YET, AND THAT PROVINCIAL LEADERS WHO WERE CHALLENGED CAVED IN RATHER EASILY. MOST APPOINTED BY FORMER REGIME, AND EASE WITH WHICH THEY BACKED DOWN WHEN CONFRONTED SHOWS SHALLOW POWER BASE THEY ENJOY IN PROVINCIAL AREA. RASH OF MINOR SUCCESSES COULD WELL LEAD TO MORE HEADY ATTEMPTS AGAINST UNPOPULAR OFFICIALS. CASTRODALE UNQUOTE
UNGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BANGKO16591
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS UNGER
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731013/aaaaajfo.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. CHIANG MAI 373
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: smithrj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05-Dec-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <05-Dec-2001 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PHITSANULOK STUDENT DEMONSTRATION FOLLOWING RECD FROM CHAING MAI DATED OCTOBER 24, 1973 SENT ACTION
TAGS: PINS, PGOV, TH, (SAMART PHITSANULOK)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005